

Valentina Pérez García

vperez183@email.uagm.edu · linkedin.com/in/valentinagarcía1

EDUCATION

Ana G. Méndez University (UAGM), Gurabo, Puerto Rico
Bachelor's Degree in Science
Concentration in Biology

2022 - Present
Expected May 2026

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research Intern

May 2025 - Present

Ocean Data Lab, University of Washington, Seattle, WA
Research Advisor: Dr. Shima Abadi

- Assist in the Deployment of Hydrophones and Fiber Optic Cables in Puget Sound, Seattle, USA.
- Perform Advance Underwater Signal Processing and Spectral Analyses.
- Characterize Marine Soundscapes and Identify Anthropogenic Acoustic Signatures.

Student Volunteer

October 2024 - May 2025

Proyecto Coquí (Non-Profit Organization)
University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus

- Contributed to the Puerto Rico Census of Endangered Native Coquí Frogs.
- Performed measurements, species identification, and sex determination of specimens.

Research Intern

June 2024 - August 2024

Tracy Lab, Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology, Baltimore, MD
Research Advisor: Dr. Allison Tracy

- Assisted with Oyster Disease Detection and Management in Chesapeake Bay, USA.
- Conducted Several Arrays of Assessments (histology, microscopy, dissections).
- Employed Correlations between Biodiversity Metrics and Bioacoustics to Oyster Reef Health.

Aquaculture System (RAS) Volunteer

Zohar Lab, Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology, Baltimore MD
Mentor: Matthew Stromberg, PhD Candidate

- Assisted with Aquaculture System (RAS) projects within the lab.
- Helped with maintenance and cleaning of equipment within the Aquaculture System.
- Handling of Atlantic Salmon (Sonograms, PIT Tagging, Measurement and Weight).

Lead Researcher

August 2024 - Present

Mercado Lab, Ana G. Méndez University, Gurabo, Puerto Rico
Research Advisor: Hector Delgado Rodríguez, MS

- Pioneered Lichen Diversity Research in Coastal Wetlands in Puerto Rico.
- Developed Novel Data Collection Methods.
- Quantitative Analysis of Lichen-Ecosystem Relationships.

Research Assistant Intern

June 2023 - August 2023

Paleoecology Lab, Ana G. Méndez University, Gurabo, Puerto Rico
Research Advisor: Dr. Jose Rosario

- Conducted Soil Geochemistry Analysis in Coastal Mangrove Forests.
- Assessed variety of soil properties (texture, pH, DO, Salinity, nutrient levels).
- Conducted thorough analysis of soil core samples.

Student Researcher

January 2023 - August 2024

Mercado Lab, University of Puerto Rico, Bayamón Campus
Research Advisor: Dr. Alex Mercado

- Supported Coral Reef Restoration Projects and Conducted Bioacoustic Monitoring.
- Conducted Statistical Tests and Acoustic Indices (GLMM, SPL, ACI).
- Quantified and Analyzed Large Data Sets.

GRANTS

Puerto Rico Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Research ROUSS Grant	January 2025
Received an undergraduate stipend (\$800) and research material grant (\$200) for academic and research support.	
Undergraduate Student Research Fellowship by The Torrey Botanical Society	May 2025
Won a 1 st place research materials grant (\$1,500) to support research expenses.	

PUBLICATIONS

Velázquez-Alvarado J, Pérez-García V , Backstrom JT, S. Tellechea J, Suleimán-Ramos SE, Mercado-Molina AE. <i>Spatiotemporal consistency of bioacoustics metrics in restored coral reefs</i> .	Submitted
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PRESENTATIONS

Acoustic Diversity In Coral Reefs Under Restoration In Culebra, Puerto Rico. Poster Presentation at Symposium of XX UAGM Research Meeting, Carolina, Puerto Rico.	April 21, 2023
Acoustic Diversity In Coral Reefs Under Restoration In Culebra, Puerto Rico. Poster Presentation at Symposium of Coral Reefs Week, Caguas Center for Science and Technology (CSA), Caguas, Puerto Rico.	June 10, 2023
Phonic Richness Daily Variation in Restored Coral Reefs in Culebra, Puerto Rico. Poster Presentation at the Ocean Sciences Meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, with a travel award from the ASLO Multicultural Program.	February 20, 2024
Phonic Richness Daily Variation in Shallow Water Reefs Under Restoration at Culebra, Puerto Rico. Poster Presentation at SACNAS UPRRP Local Conference, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico. Awarded 2nd place in Environmental Science Category.	March 9, 2024
Phonic Richness Daily Variation in Shallow Water Reefs Under Restoration at Culebra, Puerto Rico. Panel conversation at XXI UAGM Research Meeting, Cupey, Puerto Rico.	April 19, 2024
Phonic Richness Daily Variation in Shallow Water Reefs Under Restoration at Culebra, Puerto Rico. Oral Presentation at 57th ACS Junior Technical Meeting (JTM), Aguadilla, Puerto Rico.	April 20, 2024
Assessment of Lichen Diversity in a Coastal Wetland in Arecibo, Puerto Rico. Oral Presentation at UAGM Undergraduate Symposium, Gurabo, Puerto Rico.	May 17, 2024
Phonic Richness Daily Variation in Shallow Water Reefs Under Restoration at Culebra, Puerto Rico. Oral Presentation at Symposium of Coral Reefs Week host by Department of Natural Resources of Puerto Rico.	June 4, 2024
Environmental Variation Impact on Co-Infections in the Eastern Oyster (<i>Crassostrea virginica</i>). Oral Presentation at 23rd IMET Summer Intern Research Day, Baltimore, Maryland.	August 8, 2024
Evaluating Lichen Diversity Value in Arecibo, Puerto Rico's Coastal Mangrove Forest. Poster Presentation at SACNAS UPRRP 2nd Local Conference, Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico.	March 8, 2025
Phonic Richness Daily Variation in Shallow Water Reefs Under Restoration at Culebra, Puerto Rico. Poster Presentation at Annual Research Symposium at the Institute for Advanced Computational Science (IACS) at Stony Brook University, New York, USA.	April 17, 2025

Impact of Environmental Variation on Pest and Parasite Patterns in Eastern Oysters (<i>Crassostrea virginica</i>) in Chesapeake Bay. Poster Presentation at the Ecological Society of America Annual Meeting in Baltimore, Maryland, with travel support from the SEEDS ESA Program.	August 14, 2025
Evaluating Lichen Diversity Value in Arecibo, Puerto Rico's Coastal Mangrove Forest. Poster Presentation at the NDiSTEM Sacnas Annual Meeting in Columbus, Ohio, with travel support from the SACNAS Travel Award. Accepted.	October 31, 2025

AWARDS

ASLO Multicultural Program (New Orleans, USA)	February 2024
Awarded full funding to participate in the ASLO Multicultural Program, presenting research and engaging with scientists at the ASLO Ocean Sciences Meeting to promote diversity in marine science.	
Visit NC State Program - The Graduate School (North Carolina, USA)	November 2024
Awarded full funding to participate in the 2024 Visit NC State Graduate School Program, meeting with faculty and touring research facilities in marine, earth, and atmospheric sciences.	
Getting You Into IU Indianapolis Institute Program (Indiana, USA)	April 2025
Awarded full funding to participate in the 2024 Getting You Into IU–Indianapolis Program, learning about graduate admissions, funding opportunities, and strategies for building a strong application.	
SEEDS ESA Field Trip - University of Virginia, Coastal Research Center (USA)	May 2025
Awarded full funding to participate in an ESA SEEDS Field Trip, gaining hands-on experience in ecological fieldwork, including Rod Surface Elevation Table (RSET) measurements, insect surveys, and canopy cover estimation.	
BEACHES Program - Northeastern University (Boston, USA)	June 2025
Awarded full funding to attend workshop at Northeastern University, and receive mentorship on graduate school applications and exploring careers in marine, environmental, and geosciences.	
MTS Sonar and ROV Workshop - Northwestern Michigan College (Michigan, USA)	June 2025
Awarded full scholarship to attend the Marine Technology Society (MTS) Summer Workshop, gaining hands-on experience in piloting ROVs, deploying sonar systems, and collecting data aboard the R/V Northwestern.	
SEEDS Undergraduate Student Travel Awards (Baltimore, USA)	August 2025
Awarded full funding through the SEEDS Undergraduate Student Travel Award to participate in the ESA Annual Meeting, presenting research, engaging with ecologists, and promoting diversity in the field of ecology.	
SACNAS Student Travel Awards (Ohio, USA)	Accepted
Awarded full funding through the SACNAS Travel Award to attend the 2025 National Diversity in STEM Conference in Columbus, Ohio, presenting research, connecting with STEM professionals, and promoting inclusion in the sciences.	

SKILLS AND INTERESTS

Language: Fluent in Spanish and English.

Technical Skills: Fish Handling, Histology, Microscopy, Spectrophotometers, Water Quality Testing, SONAR.

Computer Skills: Adept with Microsoft Office Suite; Basic Proficiency in ArcGIS, and MATLAB; Proficiency in RStudio, and Python.

Extracurriculars: President of the American Chemical Society Student Chapter at UAGM.

Mentorship & Outreach: Mentored 10+ students in research, delivered 5+ undergraduate lectures, and assisted with academic application reviews.

Interests: Bioacoustics | Conservation Ecology | Fisheries Science | Habitat Restoration | Science Education